



# HEREFORD CATHEDRAL

14 July 2020

## Supporting our Cathedral – a note from the Dean

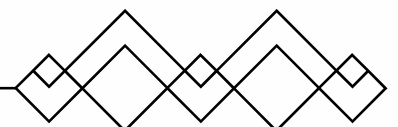
About now, I had been planning to send individual letters to all who regularly support the cathedral financially through Christian Stewardship simply to say ‘thank you’. It is your generous response to a supremely generous God which helps sustain the cathedral’s mission and ministry. However, as I write today I need to augment that message of thanks, sincerely offered, with a special appeal for help.

All aspects of society have suffered in so many ways, not least financially, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and churches and cathedrals are facing unprecedented challenges. At Hereford, the challenges are severe – in recent months there has been no income from service collections, visitor donations, events, or from the commercial arm of the cathedral (café, shop, tours and Mappa Mundi exhibition). In response we have taken all possible steps to reduce our financial exposure by limiting our budgeted expenditure to an absolute minimum, furloughing all but a handful of staff and applying for government grants where applicable. Nonetheless we forecast that we shall end the year in deficit by some £210,000. Indeed, the shortfall could be larger as our funding bodies, not least the Perpetual Trust, are now unable to undertake major events and will themselves be under pressure. Moreover, though we hope the pandemic’s financial impact will be short-lived, I have to tell you that we already expect a significant period of difficult financial recovery ahead.

As serious as this is, it would be so much worse without the support of our regular givers. Thanks to faithful Stewardship teaching and action in recent years, we have built up our giving base, so that we now have some 200 regular givers. This means that, while some cathedrals rely very heavily on income from visitors (especially those who charge for admission), we are protected to some extent.

However, the major challenge is still there, and as we look to the future we have already had to initiate a redundancy programme involving those who work in our trading arm and may need to consider whether we can continue to resource our music, liturgy and educational work to the same level as before.

I feel strongly that now is the time for all of us, as faithful supporters of the cathedral, to step up to mitigate the worse effects of this financial crisis. For this reason, I have done my own sums and reckon I have saved between £750 and £1,000 during these three months of lockdown – no petrol, no social activities, etc. So I have disbursed £500 on charities I support and will do the same for the cathedral. In revealing this action, I only do so to ‘give a lead’. If the Dean doesn’t give a practical lead how can he possibly expect others in the congregation to





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follow? I don't do this to make you feel uncomfortable – all I ask is that you might also look back at the last months, do your own sums and then see *if* there is an additional sum which you, too, could offer to our cathedral in these unprecedented times. In fact, some of you have already 'stepped up' – as soon as lockdown began, I had news of a £500 gift from one of our members and there have been generous gifts subsequently.

Will you join me in this appeal by being as generous as you are able? It would be wonderful if you felt able to match me or to give more or less depending on your own circumstances.

I also understand that not everyone has benefited financially in the same way, and some may find it easier to respond by increasing the level of their regular giving. But if you are in a position to make a one-off gift, donations can be made in one of three ways:

1. donations by card can be made through the cathedral website at: [www.herefordcathedral.org/donate/donate-now/10/credit-card](http://www.herefordcathedral.org/donate/donate-now/10/credit-card)
2. electronic transfers should be made to: Account Name: Dean & Chapter of Hereford Cathedral; Bank Name: Lloyds Bank plc; Bank address: 8 High Town Hereford; Sort Code: 30-94-14; Account Number: 00102904
3. cheques should be made out to 'Chapter of Hereford Cathedral' and sent to the Finance Office, No 5 College Cloister, Hereford HR1 2NG.

Finally, if you would like to discuss any of this in confidence, please get in touch with Canon Barry Forrester who chairs our Finance Committee. His contact details are tel: 01584 878872 / email: [forrester.ludlow@gmail.com](mailto:forrester.ludlow@gmail.com). Both he and our Stewardship officer, Joy Roderick on tel: 01432 274783 / email: [joy.roderick@btinternet.com](mailto:joy.roderick@btinternet.com), can also advise on the practicalities involved should you wish to change your regular giving.

Thank you for all you do to enable us to do what we do. It is enormously appreciated.

With my prayers and with every good wish,

